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Authority 9012958By ZW NARA Date 7/9/07

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PEKING 015

July 11, 1973

TO: HENRY KISSINGER

FROM: DAVID BRUCE

SUBJECT: Your Visit to Peking

1. Although here the Chinese officials have been publicly quiescent for some time about Taiwan, except for Chou En-lai's emphatic statement to Senator Magnuson that he would not visit the United States while we recognized Republic of China, this subject will, I suppose, be raised in your meetings. At least they may address themselves to the timing of an eventual complete formalization of our diplomatic relations.

2. More immediate will be the problem of Cambodia. The Chinese will imply it will fall like a ripe apple into the eager hands of Sihanouk, but they may have private doubts about his ability to control the Khmer Rouge and other insurgents. Their announcement of unwillingness to participate in the negotiation of a settlement does not necessarily connote a decision not to influence an arrangement whereby peace in Cambodia could be at least temporarily achieved. Sihanouk's complaints over his forces being short of ammunition may reflect a real reduction in Chinese military aid to the revolutionary elements in that country. Chinese opposition, however, to American bombing in Cambodia may be expected to be constant.

Despite Sihanouk's assertions of determination not to enter into discussions with you, I would wager he will do so. I am, however, skeptical of his acceptance of the ceasefire proposal before he has met you face to face. Moreover, his own position is unlikely to be substantially eroded before August 15, and both he and Chinese may count on a decisive improvement in the military posture of the revolutionaries after that date. Meanwhile, they may calculate they have little to lose from delay.

The Chinese interest in Cambodia is fundamentally different from that of the erratic Prince. They want peace and neutrality, certainly for the present, in the whole of Indo-China, and the final end of American military presence in the peninsula there. Covertly they will maneuver to that end.

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2

They would undoubtedly like a regime in Phnom Penh friendly to them, and preferably hostile to the Soviet Union. No one can foretell whether Sihanouk could master the complex situation that would ensue if he were reinstalled in power, but now he is the obvious instrument available to overthrow the present government. A coalition is a possibility, but the Prince would insist on becoming its undisputed leader. Later on, before he ceased to be a resuscitated hero, he might return to France or even to Angkor, and the indigenous Communists would probably seize the succession. Or else he might again be overthrown by a coup d'etat. In sum, I believe the U.S. will have to deal directly with the Prince on this problem.

3. Japan. In spite of Chinese exhortations to us not to be nasty to the Japanese, they distrust them for historical reasons. They say Japan is at the "crossroads," and wish for us and themselves to counter any disposition there favorable to a close affiliation with the Soviets. But just as they have not forgotten the century of ignominy inflicted on them by the Western powers, they have not forgotten the humiliations and exploitations thrust upon them by the Japanese. There can be between the two countries no marriage of true minds but only one of convenience. I think our policy should be to draw Japan as inextricably as practicable into the free world net, and promote, so far as we can, progressive amity between the two Asian nations.

4. Soviet Union. You have consistently and fully kept the Chinese informed of our dealings with the Russians. They will continue to need reassurance that we are not gullible about the expansionist ambitions of the Soviet Union, and above all that reliance upon a seeming d'etente will not cause us to abandon our military vigilance. They will critically and fearfully regard in this connection any diminution of our interest in NATO, and accommodation with the Soviets on mutual reduction of forces in Europe as evidence of our being dangerously unrealistic. We must live with such uneasiness and suspicion, but try to allay it by repetitive, sincere, and convincing explanation of our political and strategic reasoning.

5. In the economic field, China's trade with us would be increased by her admission to most favored nation status. They wish to import more from us especially in technological areas; agricultural imports will be made by them only when their own food production is insufficient to their needs.

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We must remember that the goal of China has always been to be self-sufficient, and since 1949 to balance it's trade, and not incur large foreign debts. Whether they will do the latter in order to accelerate industrialization is not yet known. Unless they discover massive natural gas and oil deposits, their exports to the United States are likely to be comparatively unimportant for a long time to come.

6. Above all, we should not demand from them indiscriminating love, admiration, or even friendship. Twenty-four years of painful estrangement are not conducive to quick oblivion. This homogeneous and proud people do not crave patronage. In the private opinion of many of them, the middle kingdom is still the center of the world. A cosmos whose integrity has, in the past, too often been violated by foreign devils. We should shape our policies toward each other in the spirit of mutual self-interest, not of maudlin sentimentality.

7. I have not included in this message references to Korea, Laos and Vietnam. They will be included in a following telegram drafted in my name by John Holdridge, the contents of which I thoroughly approve. It will be dispatched from here as soon as our overburdened communicators can encode it.

Warm Regards

END OF MESSAGE

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